

Overbrook Shores 50th Anniversary Speaking Notes

September 16, 2023

Sources:

- 1) Red Mill History - Cape Gazette, Story of Red Mill Pond, by Harrison Howeth, 05/04/2019
<https://www.capegazette.com/node/180021>
- 2) Overbrook Shores History - Association's Internal Records

I hope everyone is enjoying today's festivities, whether you're getting together with 'ol friends, exploring new friendships or simply enjoying the music and various activities.

But I would like to briefly interrupt and share with you a little history of Red Mill Pond and Overbrook Shores in celebration of our 50th Anniversary.

Red Mill Pond is about 7 feet above sea level, and is 6 or 7 feet deep at most. Now today Red Mill Pond remains as one of the state's largest fresh water ponds at 150 acres.

The ponds' name originates from an old gristmill known as Red Mill that was owned by Samuel Paynter back in the pioneer days of 1750. The gristmill continued operations until the 1920s when it was destroyed by a fire once in 1885 and a second time in February 1927.

(For reference, the gristmill was located on the Coolspring Branch or creek off the Broadkill somewhere between Overbrook and Nassau.)

After the fire there was a period of transition. For example, Red Mill Pond had an aircraft observation post during WWII and was used by Cool Spring Power and Light beginning around 1959 as a future source of water supply. There were also efforts to restore the mill including a water wheel in 1965, but the lease expired in 1967 and the machinery removed.

John S. Thatcher, the owner of the power company, had previously acquired rights to Red Mill Pond back in 1958, a year before the power company's use. Since Thatcher also owned three ponds in Milton (Wagamon's, Diamond and Lavinia), plus the Millsboro Pond, he was commonly known as the "water king" as he owned more water than the State.

Nevertheless, in the early 1970's upon threats that Thatcher would drain the pond and plant rice fields in its rich deep soil bed, Joseph Hudson and Stanley Thompson purchased the pond as a long term investment of selling water to the growing towns and communities and perhaps allow public fishing.

This leads us to Overbrook Shores...

Although Joseph Hudson and Stanley Thompson were already partners of New Dimensions Incorporated, a Lewes realty agency, it was a company named Hudson and Thompson Developers which established Overbrook Shores on October 3, 1973, recording those documents the following month on November 26, 1973. The Certificate of Incorporation was also subsequently filed December 19, 1973.

Notwithstanding that Joseph Hudson and Stanley Thompson were business partners for more than 50 years, I would like to point out Overbrook Shores is probably one of the largest communities of at least 24 communities they developed together.

(Joseph R Hudson: November 12, 1930 to April 25, 2022 - 92)
(Stanley Thompson: July 4, 1927 to June 15, 2015 - 87)

Home sites were initially marketed by Realtors O'Connor, Piper & Flynn as a Waterfront Community with total access to Red Mill Pond for boating, sailing, swimming, water skiing, fishing, etc. Sites started at \$17,900 touting underground electric and telephone, plus public sewer available Sept. 1999. The most expensive site at that time listed as \$69,900. Later, Hudson Management, which was established in 1974, assumed marketing and sales roles.

Development of Overbrook Shores was in three sections. And by November 1975, 2 homes were occupied. In 1976 the roads for Section A were completed by DeIDOT. And by 1982 the developer completed the roads for the remaining two sections. In August 1991 the roads for all three sections had been officially transferred to DeIDOT for state maintenance. I would also like to point out that Hudson had even obtained permits to dredge 3,106 cubic yards of Red Mill Pond at Overbrook Shores.

(Sect A, E. Mill to S. Mill & Holly, transferred by year end 1976)

(Sect B, remaining S. Mill, W. Mill, Green Valley, Apples Way, Holly, W. Holly, Lilly Pad)

(Sect C, Randor, Jays Way, Ole Grist, Overbrook, Orchards Way)

Unfortunately some of our older records may be insufficient to establish clear timelines.

It appears that Hudson Management first began discussing handing over Overbrook Shores to its residents in November 1986 (11/1/86). Records also indicate that further discussions occurred in June 1991, which included the involvement of Jim McCloskey's, who was perhaps the first Chairmen of Overbrook Shores, Sect A (Lot 53). Still other records indicate that handing over Overbrook Shores may not have been finalized until August 1994 along side the with the merging of the two separate associations established here at the time known as Overbrook Shores Homeowners Association and Overbrook Shores Residence Association. But it is unclear which association represented what.

Today our community still has 34 residents or about 11% (properties) of the community who purchased here before the 1990s and represent over a century worth of knowledge. If we include the number of long term residents who purchased prior to 1995 we jump to 55 members or 18% of our community representing close to 2 centuries of knowledge.

With over 38% of our residents who have called Overbrook Shores for more than 20 years I would like to think our slogan "Friends Live Here!" rings true.

If anyone would like a copy of my notes, we will include them on our website.

(1,280 yrs) // (1,938 yrs)

(Americans median homeowner tenure in 2021 was 13.2 years. Here at Overbrook Shores it is 15 years)

That said I would like to welcome one of our long term resident of 38 years as a guest speaker. For all accounts, he may have been our very first elected president of the newly merged community known today as Overbrook Shores Homeowners Association. Certainly his wealth of knowledge will not only be inspiring but will provide us with a greater connections to our past.

So please help me warmly welcome (to the stage) Bill Collick.